Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council

Mrs C Dixon
Clerk to the Council

Council Offices
6 Goatbeck Terrace
Langley Moor
County Durham
DH7 8JJ
Tel: 0191 3789947
info@brandonandbyshottlesparishcouncil.gov.uk

9th October 2026

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of the Parish Council which will be held in the Council Chambers, 6 Goatbeck Terrace, Langley Moor, Durham, DH7 8JJ, on Friday 16th October 2026, at 6.30pm

Mrs Claire Dixon
Clerk to the Council

A G E N D A

109. Apologies for Absence – to consider for approval.
110. Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations – to consider any declarations by councillors in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 or the Council's Code of Conduct for approval.
111. Minutes of the previous meetings– to consider for approval the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2026 (attached).
112. Public Participation – to receive any questions or representations from members of the public.
113. Brandon Carrside – to consider report (attached).
114. Planning Applications – to consider any response to applications received between 9th September - 2026 (attached).
115. Invoices for payment – to consider invoices for approval (attached).
116. Register of Delegated Decisions - to note the delegated decisions (attached).
117. CDALC AGM – to consider attendees to training courses (attached).
118. Local Networks Nominations – to consider the information (attached).
119. Ward Budgets Income and Expenditure Report– to consider the information (attached).
120. Christmas Donations List – to confirm the list of Christmas Donations (attached).
121. Christmas Trees – to consider the purchase of the Christmas trees and confirmation of locations.
122. Motion from Cllr J Hirst regarding open spaces within the Parish – to consider the proposal (attached).
123. Browney Banner – to consider the correspondence (attached).
124. County Councillors Report – to consider the information.
125. Community Highways Worker – to consider the information (attached).
126. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/2026 - to consider the report of the external auditor on the conclusion of the audit (attached).

127. Internal Auditors Appointment – information to follow.

BRANDON & BYSHOTTLES PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 6, GOATBECK TERRACE,
LANGLEY MOOR, DURHAM, DH7 8JJ
ON FRIDAY 18th SEPTEMBER 2026, AT 6.30 PM

Present:
Councillor S Leckenby (Chair)
Councillors P Askell, D Bell, A Bonner, F Bonner, D Bregazzi, J C Chapman, P Elmer, J Grantham, D Hindmarch, J E Hirst, J Jamieson, E H Simpson, F D Simpson, C J Smith, P Stoddart, J A Turnbull, M Wall and M Wilson.

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs C Dixon (Clerk), Mrs S Cash (Assistant Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

The meeting began with one minute silence for ex Councillor Michael Rochfords late wife, Eileen Rochford who was his Consort.
The Chair requested that any politics are left at the door.

80. Apologies for Absence
Apologies received from Councillor D Rowland and Councillor J S Burt.
RESOLVED: To **NOTE** the apologies.

81. Declarations of Interest & Requests for Dispensations
Declarations of interest were received from the following:
Item 87c – Cllr P Stoddart – Ushaw Moor Cricket Club.
Item 89 - Cllr J Grantham - Brandon Carrside - Committee Member.
Item 89- Cllr S Leckenby - Brandon Carrside - Committee Member.
Item 89 - Cllr J Turnbull - Brandon Carrside - Committee Member.
Item 89 – Cllr D Simpson – Brandon Carrside – Observer.
Item 89 – Cllr J Jamieson – Brandon Carrside – Observer.

RESOLVED: To **RECEIVE** the declarations of interest.

82. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th July 2026 and 24th July 2026
RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2026 and 24th July 2026 were **CONFIRMED** as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

83. Minutes of the Allotment Meeting – To **NOTE** the minutes of the meeting held on 14th July 2026.

84. Minutes of the Finance Meeting – To **NOTE** the minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2026.

85. Public Participation – to receive any questions or representations from members of the public.
RESOLVED: There was **NO** public participation.

Initials .....

86. Presentation of Donations

a. **Waterhouses Community Association** – The Chair presented a cheque for £500 towards improving the disabled access at Waterhouses Community Association.
b. **Friends of Addison Park –** the Chair presented a cheque for £700 towards costs associated with the recent Fun Day held in the park.

87. Donations

a. **The Browney Club**
RESOLVED: To **REJECT** the funding request towards the Halloween Party, as less than one year has elapsed since the previous donation was made. The Browney Club is invited to resubmit a donation request in November for a future event, as the Halloween Party will have already taken place.
b. **Building Better Community Partnership**
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** a donation of £300, being £50 from Brandon ward budget, £50 from Ushaw Moor ward budget, £50 from New Brancepeth ward budget, £50 from Esh Winning ward budget, £50 from Meadowfield ward budget and £50 from Langley Moor ward budget towards baby and equipment supplies.
c. **Ushaw Moor Cricket Club**
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** a donation of £500, from Ushaw Moor ward budget towards the annual firework display.

88. The Flass Inn and Band – To consider payment of £150 for the Flass Inn towards refreshments for the Christmas Tree light switch on event and £50 payment for the band.
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** payment of £150 to the Flass Inn and £50 payment to the band from Ushaw Moor ward.

89. Brandon Carrside
RESOLVED: to **NOTE** the report. To **DELEGATE** the Clerk to send a thank you letter for all the hard work and support with litter picking.

90. Planning Applications – To consider a response to applications received between 3rd July 2026 – 4th September 2026.

DM/26/01589/TEL - The Sir Bobby Robson Centre, Durham Academy, Bracken Court, Ushaw Moor, Durham, DH7 7NG. WHP Telecoms Ltd - Installation of a telecommunications base station comprising a lattice telecommunications tower and associated ground-based equipment.

DM/26/01753/FPA - Land to the rear of 31A to 33 Lobley Hill Road, Meadowfield Durham, DH7 8RQ - Erection of 1 no. dwelling with detached annex/garage.

DM/26/01715/FPA - Land to the South of Cockhouse Lane, Ushaw Moor, Durham DH7 7PN - Proposed V board stack signage for housing development.

DM/26/01794/FPA - Hillcrest, Brandon Lane, Brandon, Durham, DH7 8PS. Single storey extension, removal of a timber porch and garage, erection of replacement garage and minor change to the driveway onto unclassified road.

DM/26/00692/FPA - Land to the west of 9-10 Ushaw Terrace, Ushaw Moor, Durham, DH7 7PD - Demolition of two existing garages and their replacement with a detached garage.

DM/26/01588/FPA - Land opposite 1 to 9, South View, Ushaw Moor, Durham, DH7 7PS - Installation of a new plant solution (including C02 Packaged Gas Cooler and 3 floor mounted A/C Units)

DM26/01788/FPA - 20 Grant Close, Ushaw Moor, Durham, DH7 7PS - Single storey front extension.

DM/26/01894/FPA - 19 Fredrick Street South, Meadowfield, Durham, DH7 8LZ Change of use from Class C4 (HMO) TO Sui Generis (Large HMO)

DM/26/01920/FPA - 17 Ashbrook Close, Brandon, Durham, DH7 8TE - Change of use of an existing freestanding garage within the rear garden to use as a beauty salon.

DM/26/02025/AD - St Lukes Church Hall, Cockhouse Lane, Ushaw Moor, Durham DH7 7PN - 3no. advertising boards and 1no. totem board directing to temporary sales office located in Church Hall.

Cllr Hirst thanked the Clerk for drawing attention to the City of Durham Trust's objection to the application of a certificate of lawfulness for the HMO at 19 Frederick Street which substantiates the Parish Council's own objection to it (Minute 67). He also encouraged the Clerk to forward a copy for information to the Head of Planning Enforcement, with whom she has previously corresponded.

RESOLVED: To submit an **OBJECTION** to planning application DM/26/01920/FPA at 17 Ashbrook Close, Brandon, on the grounds that the proposed application could exacerbate existing parking problems, increase traffic and result in increased noise. Members also raised concerns about whether emergency service vehicles would be able to access the area safely and without obstruction due to the additional parking associated with the application.

It was further **RESOLVED** to **DELEGATE** authority to the Clerk to submit the Parish Council's objection on behalf of the Council, reflecting the concerns raised by Members.

91. Licensing Application

RESOLVED: To **NOTE** the application.

92. Invoices for Payment

To **NOTE** the invoices paid in recess for the month of August in the sum of £23,386.86. Authorisation was requested to pay accounts for £5,676.97 and additional accounts of £1278.13. Two Councillors to verify the invoices.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** authorisation of the accounts.

Initials .....

93. Bank Transfer

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the request of £10,000 being transferred from CCLA to the Co-Operative Bank to cover payments for August and September 2026.

94. Removal of Signatories and Authorised Users

To consider the report.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the removal of A Bonner as signatory. To add S Leckenby as signatory. To remove A Bonner, J Grantham and J Jamieson as authorised users. To remove all past signatories and authorised users noted in the report.

95. Register of Delegated Decisions

RESOLVED: To **NOTE** the list of delegated decisions.

96. Christmas Donations Policy and Grant Form

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the Policy and Grant Form.

97. Christmas Donations List 2026

To consider the donations list.

RESOLVED: to **DEFER** the item until the next meeting so members can inform the Clerk of any changes and/or amendments by November. Councillor M Wall requested to add Esh Winning Academy.

98. Floral Tubs and Displays Contract

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the contract with DK Horticulture for the next two years.

99. North East Anti Racism Coalition

To consider attendees to the research launch event.

RESOLVED: To **APRROVE** Councillor J Chapman to attend and request a report be submitted following the event.

100. NAC Conference and AGM 26th September 2026

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** Councillors A Bonner, F Bonner, S Leckenby and D Bell to attend. To **APPROVE** nominations of A Bonner as Chair, S Gilling as Vice Chair and D Bell as Treasurer.

101. Code of Conduct Policy

Cllr Hirst proposed approval of the Code of Conduct for Members but pointed out that the numbering system differs from the source document and suggested it be harmonised for consistency. He also requested that a note of thanks be sent to the Monitoring Officer for the Code of Conduct training session she delivered on 4th September.

Cllr Turnbull expressed disappointment at the number of members who attended the training.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the Code of Conduct Policy.

Initials .....

102. Remembrance Sunday

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** 3x type C wreaths for Ushaw Moor ward, 1x BBPC logo, x2 blank. Brandon 1x wreath, x1 box of poppies, x1 money box for Meadowfield Club. Other Wards to let the Clerk know what they would like via email in the near future.

103. Burgess and Hyder Dental Practice

Cllr Hirst commented that the proposed letter to the MP should also blame the inadequacy of NHS funding, which is causing dental practices everywhere to go private, forcing people on low incomes to suffer the most.

To consider a motion from Cllr M Wilson to approve the draft letter and authorise its submission to the MP.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the Clerk to send the letter which had been drafted with no amendments.

104. CDALC Training

To consider attendees to training courses.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** Councillors E Simpson, C Smith and J Hirst to attend 'Budgeting for Parish and Town Councils' and 'Making Meetings Matter' training. Councillors C Smith and J Hirst to attend 'Becoming an Internal Auditor for Parish and Town Councils – What you need to know' training.

105. Ward Budgets Review

Cllr Hirst requested to minute that the Langley Moor ward overspend of £3300 for floral displays is entirely due to the change in policy whereby such expenditure is now charged to each ward for displays within its boundary. Noted that Langley Moor ward Councillors, in liaison with the Clerk, are planning significant reductions in such expenditure next year, along with removal of charges for displays outside its ward boundary that contravene the new policy. Noted that the Clerk has offered to produce and display an accurate map of the Parish's ward boundaries which will be helpful.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the Ward budgets.

106. National Joint Council Pay Award 2026-2027

To consider the report.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the pay award.

107. Local Networks

To consider the information.

Councillor A Bonner highlighted that some community groups are finding the application form challenging to complete and understand. Councillor A Bonner requests the Clerk to speak with Joanne Ashworth if they can be simplified.

The Clerk advised members that she can request funding to improve Waterhouses and Broompark Play Areas.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the Clerk to liaise with Joanne Ashworth and to request funding for both parks.

Initials .....

108. Proposal for Dr Claire Ogah's Talk

To consider the motion from Councillor J Chapman

Cllr Hirst commented that although the Council clearly welcomes the initiative, public safety is a paramount priority which he and other Councillors have raised serious concerns about. No supporting evidence has been provided of a risk assessment or risk management plan, essential for assurance of public safety and liability indemnity, necessitating consultation and cooperation with the police community liaison team. The Council took a vote regarding funding this, 11 against, 6 in favour therefore the Council will not be funding this.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** Councillor J Chapman to liaise with the Police regarding guidance on the matter and Tom Sharples, Brandon Community Hall as this is the potential venue for the talk. Councillor J Chapman to re-draft the proposal.

The Chair informed members that the Clerk had successfully completed her Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) qualification. Members congratulated her on this achievement.

The meeting closed at 19.52 PM

Signed ..... Date .....

Initials .....

BRANDON & BYSHOTTLES PARISH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Week Ending 11 September 2026

DM/26/02261/RM

Application for Reserved Matters in relation to Layout only for the primary spine roads and SUDs infrastructure within Phase 2b only, pursuant to hybrid consent DM/25/00762/FPA (Amended Description to refer to Phase 2b 05/10/2026). | Red Barns Brandon Durham DH7 8DA

DM/26/00455/FPA

Retention of retaining walls, raised platform, boundary fences in excess of 1 metre adjacent to B6302 | White House Cockhouse Lane Ushaw Moor Durham DH7 7PW

Week ending 25 September 2026

DM/26/02301/PIP

Conversion of former agricultural storage building to 1no residential dwelling. Barn to the north of Langley Wood House, Sleetburn Lane, Langley Moor, Durham, DH7 8LQ

Week ending 02 October 2026

DM/26/02449/PIP

DM/26/02449/PIP | Permission in principle for 5no residential dwellings | Woodside Sleetburn Lane Langley Moor Durham DH7 8LQ

DM/26/02511/FPA

Retention of freestanding raised deck and gazebo. 87 Braunespath Estate, New Brancepeth, Durham, DH7 7JQ.

Payee	Date	Description	Payment Method	Amount	Credit
02 Parish phone	08/10/2026	Parish mobile	BACS	£ 45.00	
Amazon	24/09/2026	Photo paper	CARD	£ 10.99	Return in progre
Amazon	28/09/2026	Photo paper	BACS	£ 11.99	
Amazon	29/09/2026	Magnets UM notice board	CARD	£ 4.99	
Booking.com	21/09/2026	Hotel for conference	CARD	£ 172.67	
British Gas	19/09/2026	Parish Electric	DD	£ 54.93	
Carrside	30/09/2026	Salary Costs - September 2026	BACS	£ 3,448.76	
DCC	23/09/2026	Pension Contributions	BACS	£ 959.10	
DK Horticulture	26/09/2026	Floral Displays	BACS	£ 3,618.58	
DU Clean	07/09/2026	Parish Cleaning	BACS	£ 93.60	
Durham County Council	02/10/2026	Pest control Parish - Wasps	BACS	£ 67.20	
Durham County Council	24/09/2026	26/27 Precept	BACS		£ 146,897.00
Durham PAT Testing	24/09/2026	Portable Appliance Testing - Office	BACS	£ 66.00	
E On Next	02/10/2026	Xmas lights electric UM	DD	£ 19.70	
E On Next	02/10/2026	Xmas lights electric M'Field	DD	£ 18.18	
E On Next	02/10/2026	Xmas light electric LM	DD	£ 18.23	
E On Next	02/10/2026	Xmas tree electric NB	DD	£ 17.98	
E On Next	02/10/2026	Xmas tree electric EW	DD	£ 18.23	
HMRC	23/09/2026	06 Sept - 05 Oc 2026	BACS	£ 1,210.68	
John Chapman	23/09/2026	Train fare to attend talk	BACS	£ 11.85	
JRB Enterprise Ltd	22/09/2026	Dog poo bags	BACS	£ 1,867.06	
Kevin Wilson	05/10/2026	PROW maintenance	BACS	£ 835.00	
NAC	08/10/2026	X4 Evening meals at conference	BACS	£ 80.00	
NAC	08/10/2026	A & F Bonner accomodation	BACS	£ 104.00	
NAC	08/10/2026	4X attendees - Conference	BACS	£ 384.00	
O2 Daisy Communications	11/09/2026	Parish phone and internet	DD	£ 241.54	
O2 Daisy Communications	12/08/2026	Parish phone and internet	DD	£ 241.54	Missed off Aug li
O2 Parish Mobile	08/09/2026	Parish mobile	DD	£ 45.00	
O2 Parish Mobile	08/08/2026	Parish mobile	DD	£ 45.00	Missed off Aug li
Royal British Legion	23/09/2026	Poppy box & wreaths	CARD	£ 410.50	
Salaries	30/09/2026	Sep-26	BACS	£ 3,627.92	
Shildon Town Council	12/12/2026	Civic Function - Shildon TC	BACS	£ 69.99	
SLCC	05/10/2026	Clerks Membership	BACS	£ 316.00	
Total Energies	01/10/2026	Gas - Parish	DD	£ 86.46	
Transcendit	21/07/2026	Microsoft 365 back up	BACS	£ 118.80	Missed off July li
UKOS	05/10/2026	Confidential waste removal	BACS	£ 78.79	
UMAG	08/10/2026	Hut hire - poo bags	BACS	£ 22.00	
TOTAL				**£ 18,442.26**	

Delegated Decisions

In accordance with the Openess of Local Government Regulations 2014 s7			
Date	**Details**	**Alternative options (if any)**	**Details of any consultees (if any)**
08/10/2026	Transfer of £114,000 Precept from Co-Op to CLLA	none	2 x ward members who are signatories on the bank

Info - Brandon and Byshottles Parish Council

From: CDALC <CDALC@durham.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 September 2026 12:35
Subject: CDALC AGM Sat 24th Oct 2026 Notice and Papers - Seaton Holme, Easington 10am

This email originated from outside of Brandon and Byshottles Parish Council. Please be vigilant.

Dear CDALC Member Councils and Executive Committee,

80th Annual General Meeting
Sat 24th October 2026 at 10am
Easington Village Parish Council, Seaton Holme, Easington, Peterlee SR8 3BS

I hereby give you notice of the **80th Annual General Meeting** (AGM) of the **County Durham Association of Local Councils.** The Annual General Meeting is an important event for CDALC, and it is hoped your council will send its two appointed representatives to attend.

Tea / Coffee will be available from 9.30am onwards. We always find this a very worthwhile opportunity for networking prior to the meeting.

We are delighted that our meeting will be opened by **Cllr Robbie Roddiss, Chair of Durham County Council**, and we will end with a very topical presentation, **Making AI Work: Durham County Council's experience and insights so far – Ben Tulloch, DCC Strategic Digital Manager**.

Each CDALC member council is entitled to appoint **two** representatives to attend, however, only **one** may vote. Executive Committee members can attend and have **one** vote, regardless of their own council's allocation.

Please let us know how many representatives will be attending from your council, by clicking here and using this booking form, by Mon 19th Oct at 5pm as it will assist us with the venue arrangements. To submit apologies please use the same form and insert 0 into Question 2 'Number of Attendees'.

If you are a member from a Smaller council and you propose to stand for the CDALC Executive Committee (see agenda item 7), it would be helpful for us to know this in advance, and it is anticipated that prospective candidates will make their case to the AGM.

Can all representatives please have access to the following papers ready for the meeting.

- CDALC AGM Oct 2026 agenda and reports
- CDALC 2025/26 Annual Report and Statement of Accounts

We hope that as many of you as possible can join us.

Yours sincerely,

David Bell
CDALC Chair

Audrey Christie
Executive Officer (Tues to Fri)

07708327943

Janet Wainwright
Finance and Admin Officer (Weds and Thurs)
07708327285

Web: https://cdalc.info/





Customer Notice

We have recently updated our terms and conditions for all our services, including making some important updates to our privacy notices. To find out more about how we collect, use, share and retain your personal data, visit: www.durham.gov.uk/dataprivacy

Help protect our environment by only printing this email if absolutely necessary. The information it contains and any files transmitted with it are confidential and are only intended for the person or organisation to whom it is addressed. It may be unlawful for you to use, share or copy the information, if you are not authorised to do so. If you receive this email by mistake, please inform the person who sent it at the above address and then delete the email from your system. Durham County Council takes reasonable precautions to ensure that its emails are virus free. However, we do not accept responsibility for any losses incurred as a result of viruses we might transmit and recommend that you should use your own virus checking procedures.

Info - Brandon and Byshottles Parish Council

From: Clerk
Subject: FW: Nominations sought for DCC Local Networks parish town councillor reps

Dear Clerks, Chairs and Executive Committee members,

Town and Parish Council representation on Durham County Council's (DCC) Local Networks (LN)

You'll be aware that there is progress with the establishment of the Local Networks (replacements of the Area Action Partnerships) which are DCC's formal community engagement structures. CDALC has agreed to deal with the appointment of Parish and Town Council representatives to the LN **Local Stakeholder Panels** which are the 'partner' layer in the LN structure.

This email includes information about the appointment of Parish and Town Council representatives, and we need your help to share the information with your councils and to provide nominations for the positions. Please read on.

- What are Stakeholder Panels and expectations of representatives
- Which councils are in each Local Network, and how representatives are allocated
- How do we nominate a councillor to be on our Local Network?
- Important information about nominations and positions

What are the Stakeholder Panels and expectations of representatives

These are part of the each Local Network's structure. From the bottom upwards they are made up of:

- a Local Network Forum;
- a Stakeholder Panel; and
- an Elected Member (from DCC) Board.

You can find more information at About Local Networks - Durham County Council.

Our sector will be represented on the Stakeholder Panels, along with other partner organisations such as housing providers and representatives of health, police and fire. We have been allocated **one Parish Council and one Town Council seat in each LN** with some adjustments including where there aren't any Town Councils (the Parish Councils can take that seat).

Stakeholder Panels will be an information sharing network which will give shape to and provide oversight of development of Local Network Action Plans. They will also function as an advisory panel to the Local Elected Member Board, making recommendations on priorities and funding proposals.

Expectations of representatives are:

- Attend up to 4 meetings per year.
- Contribute to the development and delivery of Local Networks Plans for the full LN area.
- Actively promote the work of the Local Network.
- Be committed to improving their local area

- Have knowledge of local community issues
- Be committed to the values of equality and diversity
- Be able to communicate effectively

Which councils are in each Local Network and how representatives are allocated

You can see the distribution of Parish and Town Councils across the LNs in this table illustrating which councils are in which LN and how the representation of one Parish Council and one Town Council pans out across the County. Do open this as it will help the rest of this email make more sense.
You can also see the The LNs shown on a map of the county but alas this doesn't show parish boundaries. But still useful.

There will be a total of 23 Parish and Town Council seats, with elections needed in most LNs which have more than one Parish or one Town Council. However, there are a minority of LNs with just one Parish or one Town Council, and these councils, 6 in total, can nominate their representative directly from their own council. They are:

Town Councils

- Barnard Castle TC
- Peterlee TC
- Seaham TC
- Stanley TC

Parish Councils

- Greencroft PC
- Healeyfield PC

Nominations from these councils can be provided directly to DCC via Peter.garrod@durham.gov.uk by the end of December 2026.

All other 98 councils wishing to nominate representatives must submit nominations which will then be put forward for an election which we at CDALC will co-ordinate. See How do we nominate a councillor to be on our Local Network.

This is a summary of how the 23 seats in the 12 LN areas will be decided on.

Town Councils (1 seat per LN)

Election Status	LN area
TC to appoint directly	6 Easington, Seaham and surrounding area **(Seaham TC)** 7 Horden, Peterlee and surrounding area **(Peterlee TC)** 10 Stanley and surrounding area **(Stanley TC)** 11 Teesdale area **(Barnard Castle TC)**
Will need nominations/election	1 Newton Aycliffe and Sedgefield areas 2 Bishop Auckland and Shildon areas 9 Coxhoe, Ferryhill, Spennymoor areas 12 Weardale
Town council seat to be passed to parish councils for nominations/election as no TC in LN	3 CLS and surrounding areas 5 Durham City and surrounding areas 8 Mid-Durham and surrounding areas

No TC seat	4 Consett and surrounding areas (**Healeyfield PC – only one parish/town council in LN area)**

Parish Councils (1 seat per LN unless otherwise specified)

Election Status	Where
Will need nominations/election	1 Newton Aycliffe and Sedgefield areas 2 Bishop Auckland and Shildon areas 3 CLS and surrounding areas (2 seats) 5 Durham City and surrounding areas (2 seats) 6 Easington, Seaham and surrounding area 7 Horden, Peterlee and surrounding area 8 Mid-Durham and surrounding areas (2 seats) 9 Coxhoe, Ferryhill, Spennymoor areas 11 Teesdale area 12 Weardale
PC to appoint directly	4 Consett and surrounding areas **(Healeyfield PC)** 10 Stanley and surrounding area **(Greencroft PC)**

However, if for your LN you think it will be possible to work out a representative amongst yourselves please let us know. We're envisaging that where there is say, 2 town councils, or similar, you might be able to come to some sort of agreement without resorting to an election.

How do we nominate a councillor to be on our Local Network?

Apart from the 6 councils referred to above which can appoint from their own council, 17 of the 23 seats are open for nominations from all councils in each LN area and to be submitted to CDALC, with a closing date of Tues 17th Nov 2026 at 9am.

- The clerk should confirm the council's nomination Parish and Town Council nomination for DCC Local Networks - to be completed by the Clerk – Fill in form; and
- The nominee must provide a 200 word statement which will be used if an election is necessary. Nominee's Statement for Parish/Town Councillor position on DCC Local Networks – Fill in form

This is what will happen after Tues 17th Nov 2026:

Where only 1 candidate	The candidate will be put forward to DCC as the relevant town or parish council rep
Where >1 candidate	An election will take place. We at CDALC will set up electronic voting arrangements to send out w/b 23rd Nov 2026 with a closing date for councils of 31st Jan 2027. The candidate with the most votes wins. If there is a tie, it will be decided by lot and we will arrange for this to take place in person, at which the candidates can attend.
Where >1 candidate - All councils in each LN area will be eligible to one vote, for whichever elections ensue ie a parish council can vote for the town council reps, and vice versa.	

Important information about nominations

- Positions will be for 2 years and with the first tranche to start work early in 2027 and be in post till the May 2029 elections.
- Only one nomination permitted per council
- Town and Parish Councillors may only be on a Stakeholder Panel for one LN at any one time (this would be the scenario where a councillor sits on two councils in different LNs)
- Where a Town/Parish Council boundary straddles more than one LN boundary, the Town/Parish Council may have one councillor sitting on one LN Panel at any one time. This only applies to Etherley and Peterlee, with Peterlee already having the Town Council position on the Horden, Peterlee LN.
- Any Parish or Town Council member who is a County Councillor cannot stand for the Stakeholder Panel. They already have a seat on the Elected Member Panel.
- Town and Parish representatives are not permitted to send a substitute representative if they are unable to attend an LN meeting.

We have been working directly with Peter Garrod, Peter.garrod2@durham.gov.uk, about arranging these appointments. If you've any queries about Local Networks please contact Peter directly whereas contact us at CDALC about the nominations/elections process.

Brandon and Byshottles PC Current Year 2026-27

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 09/10/2026

AGENDA ITEM 119

Month No: 6

Cost Centre Report

		Actual Current	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
400	Brandon Ward							
4220	Water	(56)	(56)	0	(56)		(56)	0.0%
4320	Grass Cutting	(313)	(1,875)	(3,750)	1,875		1,875	50.0%
4330	Planting/Environmental imp.	(572)	(3,432)	(6,864)	3,432		3,432	50.0%
4350	Street Light Maint & Electric	0	0	(288)	288		288	0.0%
4450	Community Support	0	(3,825)	(2,439)	(1,386)		(1,386)	156.8%
4480	Carrside Youth Club	0	0	(5,000)	5,000		5,000	0.0%
410	Meadowfield Ward							
4200	Electricity	(18)	(106)	(299)	193		193	35.5%
4320	Grass Cutting	(113)	(675)	(1,350)	675		675	50.0%
4330	Planting/Environmental imp.	(354)	(2,125)	(4,250)	2,125		2,125	50.0%
4450	Community Support	0	(4,525)	(2,067)	(2,458)		(2,458)	218.9%
4480	Carrside Youth Club	0	0	(1,000)	1,000		1,000	0.0%
4700	Miscellaneous - Expenditure	0	(30)	0	(30)		(30)	0.0%
420	Langley Moor Ward							
4200	Electricity	(17)	(84)	(267)	183		183	31.4%
4330	Planting/Environmental imp.	(501)	(3,004)	(5,072)	2,068		2,068	59.2%
4350	Street Light Maint & Electric	0	0	(200)	200		200	0.0%
4450	Community Support	0	(300)	0	(300)		(300)	0.0%
4700	Miscellaneous - Expenditure	(10)	(15)	0	(15)		(15)	0.0%
430	New Brancepeth Ward							
4200	Electricity	(18)	(69)	(270)	201		201	25.7%
4320	Grass Cutting	(50)	(300)	(600)	300		300	50.0%
4330	Planting/Environmental imp.	(59)	(355)	(680)	325		325	52.2%
4450	Community Support	0	(100)	(2,737)	2,637		2,637	3.7%
440	Ushaw Moor Ward							
4200	Electricity	(19)	(381)	(2,000)	1,619		1,619	19.1%
4325	Play Area	0	(278)	(1,948)	1,670		1,670	14.2%
4330	Planting/Environmental imp.	(583)	(3,497)	(6,993)	3,496		3,496	50.0%
4450	Community Support	0	(300)	(2,949)	2,649		2,649	10.2%
4480	Carrside Youth Club	0	0	(1,000)	1,000		1,000	0.0%
4700	Miscellaneous - Expenditure	(44)	(332)	(270)	(62)		(62)	123.0%
450	Esh Winning Ward							
4200	Electricity	(17)	(99)	(550)	451		451	18.0%
4320	Grass Cutting	(180)	(1,080)	(2,160)	1,080		1,080	50.0%
4325	Play Area	(227)	(1,784)	(2,000)	216		216	89.2%
4330	Planting/Environmental imp.	(252)	(1,511)	(3,022)	1,511		1,511	50.0%
4450	Community Support	0	(1,350)	(4,276)	2,926		2,926	31.6%
4700	Miscellaneous - Expenditure	0	(1,129)	0	(1,129)		(1,129)	0.0%

Continued over page

Brandon and Byshottles PC Current Year 2026-27

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 09/10/2026

Month No: 6

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Current	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
Grand Totals:- Income	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**			**0.0%**
Expenditure	**3,402**	**32,617**	**64,301**	**31,684**	**0**	**31,684**	**50.7%**
Net Income over Expenditure	**(3,402)**	**(32,617)**	**(64,301)**	**(31,684)**			
plus Transfer from EMR	**0**	**6,950**	0	(6,950)			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	**(3,402)**	**(25,667)**	**(64,301)**	**(38,634)**			

Christmas Donation	**Amount**		**Ward**
New Brancepeth Primary school and Nursery	£	150.00	New Brancepeth
New Brancepeth Village Hall	£	100.00	New Brancepeth
New Brancepeth Church	£	100.00	New Brancepeth
New Brancepeth Residents Group	£	100.00	New Brancepeth
TOTAL	**£**	**450.00**	
Ushaw Moor Catholic Club	£	150.00	Ushaw Moor
St John Boste (St. Joseph's Church)	£	100.00	Ushaw Moor
2-4 Club St Joseph's Parish Hall	£	100.00	Ushaw Moor
St. Luke's Church	£	100.00	Ushaw Moor
Silver Tree Primary	£	100.00	Ushaw Moor
Bishop Wilkinson Education Trust (St. Joseph's R.C.School	£	100.00	Ushaw Moor
Durham Community Business College	£	100.00	Ushaw Moor
Broompark WI	£	100.00	Ushaw Moor
Ushaw Moor Cricket Club	£	100.00	Ushaw Moor
Ushaw Moor Action Group	£	250.00	Ushaw Moor
TOTAL	**£**	**1,200.00**	
Esh Winning Residents Group	£	100.00	Esh Winning
Waterhouses WI	£	100.00	Esh Winning
St John Boste (Newhouse Church)	£	100.00	Esh Winning
St. Paul's Church	£	100.00	Esh Winning
Esh Winning Baptist Church	£	100.00	Esh Winning
Esh Winning Banner Group	£	100.00	Esh Winning
Esh Winning Cricket Club	£	100.00	Esh Winning
Esh Winning Academy	£?		Esh Winnning
Waterhouses Community Association	£	100.00	Esh Winning
Woodland Road Communal Group - Elderly Group	£	100.00	Esh Winning
Waterhouses Scout Movement	£	100.00	Esh Winning
TOTAL	**£**	**1,000.00**	
St Andrew's Youth Group	£	150.00	Brandon
St Andrew's Church	£	200.00	Brandon
Brandon Academy	£	200.00	Brandon
Murray Independent Church	£	175.00	Brandon
The Orchards	£	75.00	Brandon
Brandon Communal Hall	£	350.00	Brandon
TOTAL	**£**	**1,150.00**	
Browney Club	£	400.00	Meadowfield

Browney Residents Assoc	£	100.00	Meadowfield
TOTAL	**£**	**500.00**	

St. Patrick's Church	£	200.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
St. John's Church	£	200.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
St. John Ambulance	£	175.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
5th Durham City Scouts	£	50.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
Salvation Army	£	75.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
St John's Hall	£	200.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
Meadowfield & Langley Moor Over 60's	£	225.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
Browney Primary	£	200.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
Langley Moor Primary	£	200.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
Langley Moor Nursery	£	200.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
St Patrick's School	£	200.00	Brandon, M'Field & Langley Moor
TOTAL	**£**	**1,925.00**	

8th October 2026

Christmas Trees AGENDA ITEM 121

Background

The Council has previously purchased and installed Christmas Trees at Carrside Youth Club, Ushaw Moor and Esh Winning.

Recommendation

The Council considers the above and confirms to the Clerk whether the trees are to be purchased and installed at the same locations.

Proposal by Cllr John Hirst (seconded by Cllr Edwin Simpson)

It is proposed that Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council requests the Clerk to:

(i) prepare a case for securing appropriate designations to protect open spaces within the Parish as invaluable community assets that "provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby; have an ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure, as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development, and an important component in the achievement of sustainable development" (National Planning Practice Guidance);
(ii) consult the Open Spaces Society (OSS), of which the Council is already a member, for advice, e.g. on the feasibility of emulating Brancepeth Parish Council's (2025) Local Green Space and Protected Open Space Background Paper (attached), and on preparing bids, e.g. from the Local Area Network or Section 106 monies, for funding any requisite facilitating work, e.g. drawing maps and undertaking ecological surveys.

Supporting Information
Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council is a member of the Open Spaces Society (OSS) which helps its members to protect their local common land, town and village greens, open spaces and public paths, and answers their queries. The OSS states that "local councils (town, parish, and community councils) are well placed to protect and care for the open spaces and paths in their areas. Some powers are specifically conferred on local councils, others are conferred on the public in general but are best exercised by local councils, since they have the authority, and more resources than most individuals and voluntary organisations, and they command respect."

Brandon & Byshottles Parish contains numerous open spaces many of which are currently unprotected that the OSS believes are at risk from recent planning reforms. It sets out some of the ways (e.g. as noted below) in which local councils can try to secure protection of open spaces by listing them as community assets and applying for them to be designated, e.g. as Local Green Spaces or Protected Open Spaces, and be recognised as such, e.g. by the Local Authority's Strategic Open Spaces Strategy.

Community Assets
Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011 introduced the concept of community assets ('assets of community value'). These assets are defined as buildings or other land which are mainly in actual use for the social, well-being or social interests of the local community. They include parks and open green spaces. An application for listing community assets can be made by a parish council or by a voluntary or community body with a local connection on a form supplied by the local authority.

Local Green Spaces (LGS)
The National Planning Framework (NPPF), published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government in July 2018, with subsequent amendments, sets out the government's planning policies for England. Paragraphs 106 to 108 introduce a Local Green Space designation (LGS) to protect local green areas of particular importance to local communities. This will enable communities, in certain circumstances, to identify and protect areas that they value. Once designated, the LGS is subject to the same strong development restrictions as Green Belt, and new development is ruled out, other than in special circumstances. The LGS is designated by the planning authority.

The OSS urges local people to lobby the authority to confer LGS designations whenever they satisfy the criteria for protection such as:

being reasonably close to the community it serves and demonstrably special to it, e.g. for contributing to the local identity and character of the area, creating a sense of place that has local significance, e.g. for its history or recreational use, and/or for being an accessible nature-friendly space, and/or of importance for biodiversity, encouraging engagement with nature and the promotion and protection of wildlife habitats.

AGENDA ITEM 123

Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council

Mrs Claire Dixon
Clerk to the Council

Council Offices
6 Goatbeck Terrace
Langley Moor
County Durham
DH7 8JJ
Tel: 0191 3789947
info@brandonandbyshottlesparishcouncil.gov.uk

8th October2026

Dear Joanne,

We are writing regarding the banner and your request for it to be moved to Browney Club.

We appreciate that residents would like to see the banner located in Browney, and we understand the reasons behind the request for it to be stored at Browney Club. The Council has given this careful consideration, including looking at the proposed location and whether there are other suitable locations within Browney where the banner could be safely stored.

As you are aware, the banner is currently stored at the Community Hall in a purpose-made case which is specifically the appropriate size for the banner. This allows it to be stored without being rolled or folded, helping to protect it from damage.

We appreciate that you have indicated that a case could be made for the banner at the Club. However, for the banner to be stored correctly, any case would need to be made to the same size and specification as the existing purpose-made case. We have concerns that the proposed location does not offer sufficient space to accommodate a case of this size and whether the stairwell would be a suitable place for storing an item of such importance to the local community.

When considering the request to move the banner, the Council has spoken with its insurance company to understand the implications of changing the storage arrangements. This raised a number of matters relating to the safety and appropriate storage of the banner, including whether a public house would be an appropriate location for it to be stored.

The insurance company also suggested that a professional valuation of the banner be undertaken. At this stage, we do not know whether there would be a cost involved in obtaining a professional valuation. However, should there be a cost, unfortunately the Council does not currently have the funds available to cover this.

Whilst we appreciate the community's wish for the banner to be located in Browney, the Council has decided that, at present, the best place for the banner is to remain at the Community Hall. The existing arrangements provide suitable storage in a purpose-made case and ensure that the banner remains appropriately protected and insured.

This decision does not mean that the Council could not look at the matter again in the future if circumstances change and a suitable location becomes available that provides the same level of security and protection for the banner.

Kind regards,
Claire



Mrs Claire Dixon
Clerk to the Council
Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council

7th October 2026

Community Highways Worker – Future Provision AGENDA ITEM 125

Background

The current Community Highways Worker role will end on 31st March 2027.

The Personnel Committee considered options for the future provision of the service, including employing a Community Highways Worker directly or appointing a sub-contractor.

The Committee considered that an in-house employee would require additional costs for salary, a suitable vehicle, equipment and associated resources. The existing budget would not be sufficient to cover these costs, and a significant increase in the precept would be required.

The Committee therefore considers that appointing a sub-contractor would be the most appropriate and financially sustainable option.

Recommendation

The Personnel Committee recommends that Council:

- Establish a Working Group to identify the required programme of works and prepare a suitable specification/job description for a sub-contractor.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- **where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £15 million; or**
- **where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:**
  - **are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or**
  - **have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)**

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.

2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
   - The **Annual Internal Audit Report must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
   - **Sections 1 and 2 must** be completed and approved by the authority.
   - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2026.**
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2026** Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
   - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
   - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2026
   - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
   - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
   - Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities **must** publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2026 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2025/26** approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2025/26** approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2026 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

**for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.*

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments **must** be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2026
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) **must** be approved before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references, even where approved on the same day.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) **must** certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority **must** in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period which **must** be a single period of 30 working days for inspection (this excludes weekends and public holidays) which **must** include the first 10 working days of July.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor **must** be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements **(Section 2, page 5)**. An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- Additional costs may be incurred if additional audit work is required.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2025) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2026).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights which **must** be a single period of 30 working days for inspection (this excludes weekends and public holidays) which **must** include the first 10 working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2026**

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including **the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights**, been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at **31 March 2026** been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? **NB:** do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓	

Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices, can be downloaded from **www.nalc.gov.uk** or from **www.ada.org.uk**

Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council

https://brandonandbyshottlesparishcouncil.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2026, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2025/26 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick "not covered")*			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations *(during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).*	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR *(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).*	✓		
O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.	✓		
	Yes	No	Not applicable
P. **(For local councils only)** Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

04/06/26

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

DAVID NEWMAN

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date 10/06/2026

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

****Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).**

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		*prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.*
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		*made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.*
3. We have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		*has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.*
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.		✓	*during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.*
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		*considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.*
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		*arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.*
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		*responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.*
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		*disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.*
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A	*has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.*
			✓	
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.		✓		*has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.*

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

19/06/2026.

and recorded as minute reference:

586. MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair [SIGNATURE REQUIRED]

Clerk [SIGNATURE REQUIRED]

https://brandonandbyshottlesparishcouncil.gov.uk WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures **must** agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	258,677	199,467	*Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value **must** agree to Box 7 of previous year.*
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	241,625	242,033	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	46,412	31,295	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	63,783	53,527	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	283,464	253,011	*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward	199,467	166,257	*Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. **must** equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).*
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	250,758	222,314	*The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – **To agree with bank reconciliation.***
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	387,677	432,504	*The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.*
10. Total borrowings	0	0	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?	✓		*For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.*

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval.

SIGNATURE REQUIRED C Dixon

Date 11/06/2026

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

19/06/2026

as recorded in minute reference:

58c

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2025/26

AGENDA ITEM 1014

In respect of **Brandon and Byshottles Parish Council**

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit,** it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/ .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2026 and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2025/26

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

In undertaking the review of the 2025/26 Annual and Accountability Return (AGAR) it came to our attention that the Council had not met the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 in providing electors with a period of 30 working days to inspect the 2024/25 AGAR. Accordingly, the Council has responded "No" to Assertion 4 in Section 1 of the 2025/26 AGAR to reflect this instance of non-compliance in relation to the prior year 2024/25. As assertion 4 is retrospective it refers to compliance during the relevant financial year rather than in respect of it.

In undertaking the review of the 2025/26 Annual and Accountability Return (AGAR) it came to our attention that the Council had not put in place arrangements for the effective information technology and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review. The Council has correctly answered "No" to the relevant assertion in the 2025/26 Annual Governance Statement. In future, the Council should ensure it complies with proper practices in this area and should tick 'No' to assertion 10 if this is not achieved in 2026/27.

3 External auditor certificate 2025/26

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2026

*We do not certify completion because:

Not applicable

External Auditor Name

Forvis Mazars LLP, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 1DF

External Auditor Signature Forvis Mazars LLP Date **21 September 2026**

Newcastle office
Sustainably routed via:
30 Old Bailey
London
EC4M 7AU

Tel: +44 (0)191 383 6300
forvismazars.com/uk

Ms C Dixon
Brandon and Byshottles Parish Council
6 Goatbeck Terrace
Langley Moor
County Durham
DH7 8JJ

Direct line: +44 (0)191 383 6348
Email: local.councils@mazars.co.uk

Date: 22 September 2026

Dear Ms Dixon

Completion of the limited assurance review for the year ended 31 March 2026

We have completed our review for the year ended 31 March 2026 and I have pleasure in enclosing the certified Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The External Auditor's Certificate and Report is given in Section 3.

If there are any significant matters arising from the review, they are summarised in the External Auditor's certificate in Section 3. If we have identified minor scope for improvement we have recorded this on page 2 of this letter. The Council should consider these matters and decide what action is required. In most cases this will be self-evident. In some instances we have referred to further guidance available, such as the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel Practitioners' Guide (England) 2026/27. This can be obtained via your NALC or SLCC branch, or downloaded free of charge at the following website: **https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/practitioners-guide-2025.html**.

Please also note that a copy of the 2026/27 Practitioner's Guide has now been released and is available, alongside a summary of the summary of changes from the 2025 version, at the following website: **https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/practitioners-guide-2026-27.html**. We would encourage all authorities to become familiar with this document ahead of preparing their 2026/27 Annual Governance and Accountability Returns.

Action you are required to take:

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 set out what you must do at the conclusion of the review. In summary, you are required to:

Publish (which must include publication on the authority's website) a statement **on or before 30 September to confirm:**

- that the review has been concluded and that the statement of accounts has been published;
- of the rights of inspection conferred on local government electors by section 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; and
- the address at which, and the hours during which, those rights may be exercised.

- Keep copies of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for purchase by any person on payment of a reasonable sum.
- Ensure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return remains available for public access for a period of not less than five years beginning with the date on which the Annual Governance and Accountability Return was first published.

Forvis Mazars LLP
Forvis Mazars LLP is the UK firm of Forvis Mazars Global, a leading global professional services network. Forvis Mazars LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales with registered number OC308299 and with its registered office at 30 Old Bailey, London, EC4M 7AU. Registered to carry on audit work in the UK by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. Details about our audit registration can be viewed at www.auditregister.org.uk under reference number C001139861. VAT number: GB 839 8356 73

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 do not specify the period the Completion Notice needs to be on the council's website, but this period must be reasonable.

Minor scope for improvement in 2026/27

The Internal Control Objective (O) "The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance" was ticked 'Yes' by the internal auditor however the Council ticked assertion 4 as 'No'. In future, the Council should ensure the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is accurate and complete.

The Internal Control Objective (M) "In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations" was ticked "Yes" by the internal auditor however the Council ticked assertion 4 as 'No'. In future, the Council should ensure the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) is accurate and complete.

The internal control objective (F), "petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved, and VAT appropriately accounted for", was ticked "N/A" by the internal auditor when petty cash was held by the Council. The box should have been ticked "Yes" as petty cash was held. In future, the Council should ensure the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) is accurate and complete.

Amendment to the Practitioners' Guide 2026/27 in respect of Section 2 Box 11 Trust Fund Transactions

As part of the Accounting Statements (Section 2), the authority is asked to confirm whether there are any trust fund transactions included in the figures. Box 11 has been amended to state the authority should answer based on whether trust fund transactions have been excluded from the AGAR.

We wish to draw attention to a change within the 2026/27 Practitioner's Guide (point 2.32) which confirms the authority will need to respond 'Yes' where the figures include trust fund transactions. We would encourage all authorities to familiarise themselves with the 2026/27 Practitioner's Guide (available on the NALC website) ahead of completing their 2026/27 AGAR.

Accessibility Regulations

We are aware that the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requirement for a physical 'wet ink' signature on the original AGAR, does not allow parish council's to fully comply with the Accessibility Regulations. The National Audit Office are aware that the two pieces of legislation are not compatible, therefore smaller authorities are advised to make it clear on their website that the document is a scan and will not be fully compliant with the Accessibility Regulations.

Audit fee

Our fee note for the audit, which is in accordance with the audit fee scales set by SAAA, and available at **Audit Fees | Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments (saaa.co.uk)** will follow.

If your invoice is not as expected, please check the audit fee scales via the link above as your fee band may have changed.

We would be grateful if you could arrange for this to be paid at the earliest opportunity.

Commitment to achieving net zero

We've made an important change to how we handle post - and sustainability is driving it.

In line with our net zero targets, we encourage digital communication wherever possible. However, should it be necessary for you to communicate with us by post, our correspondence address is **30 Old Bailey, London, EC4M 7AU**.

Yours sincerely



James Collins
Director
For and on behalf of Forvis Mazars LLP